

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 PRS-01 SS-15 SSM-05

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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:RONEILL:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

NEA/ARN - MR. BULLEN

NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

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AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL  
CINCEUR FOR POLAD

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS  
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR  
JANUARY 16, 1976:

MR. FUNSETH: YOU SHOULD HAVE A PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING  
THE AWARD OF A SINAI SUPPORT MISSION CONTRACT TO E SYSTEMS  
OF DALLAS, TEXAS.

IN CONNECTION WITH THIS ANNOUNCEMENT, WE HAVE AVAILABLE IN  
THE OFFICE A BIOGRAPHY OF MR. C. WILLIAM KONTOS, WHOSE  
APPOINTMENT AS DIRECTOR OF THE SINAI SUPPORT MISSION WAS  
ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY BY THE WHITE HOUSE.

Q. MR. RABIN IS SUPPOSED TO BE HERE ON THE 2ND AND 3RD OF  
FEBRUARY. ISN'T IT A BIT STRANGE THAT THE SECRETARY  
WOULD BE OUT OF THE CITY?

A. HE ISN'T GOING TO BE IN WASHINGTON AT THAT TIME.

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Q. HE ISN'T GOING TO BE IN WASHINGTON?

A. I DON'T BELIEVE SO.

Q. THIS RELEASE ON THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT NOWHERE SAYS  
THAT THE E SYSTEMS, INCORPORATED, OF DALLAS WAS THE  
LOWEST BIDDER. WAS E SYSTEMS OF DALLAS THE LOW BIDDER  
AMONGST THE FIVE OR SIX WHO BID? IT JUST SAYS THEY WERE  
CHOSEN.

A. I THINK THAT THE CONSIDERATION, AT LEAST AS I HAVE  
BEEN INFORMED BY THE SINAI SUPPORT MISSION PEOPLE, IF  
YOU READ THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS IT DID NOT MENTION

THAT NECESSARILY A LOW BIDDER WOULD RECEIVE IT. WHEN BIDS ARE EVALUATED THEY HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ABILITY OF E SYSTEMS TO PERFORM THE CONTRACT ON THE BASIS OF ITS MANAGEMENT STRENGTH AND THE THOROUGHNESS OF ITS PLANNING AND TECHNICAL COMPETENCE AS WELL AS ACCURACY AND REALISM IN ESTIMATING ITS COSTS.

Q. HOW MUCH WAS THE CONTRACT FOR? AND HOW MUCH IS IN ELECTRONICS AND HOW MUCH IS IN PERSONNEL COSTS?

A. I UNDERSTAND THE FIGURE IS ABOUT DOLS 16-1/2 MILLION FOR A PERIOD THAT ENDS SEPTEMBER 30 OF THIS YEAR.

Q. DO YOU, IN FACT, KNOW IF THIS WAS THE LOW BID OR NOT?

A. NO, I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO PUT THAT QUESTION TO YOU FOR A SUBSEQUENT ANSWER.

A. OKAY.

Q. A LIST OF THE BIDS WOULD BE BETTER. BOTH ON ELECTRONICS AND PERSONNEL.

Q. IS THERE ANY SUBSEQUENT FUNDING COMMITTED AT THIS POINT?

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A. ANY NEW FUNDING WE WOULD HAVE TO GO TO THE CONGRESS.

Q. THE CONGRESS APPROPRIATED DOLS 20 MILLION FOR THE FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION AND DOLS 10 MILLION THEREAFTER. THIS ACCOUNTS FOR DOLS 16.5 MILLION; WHAT BECOMES OF THE OTHER DOLS 3.5 MILLION?

A. ALL I HAVE BEEN INFORMED IS THAT THE ESTIMATED COST THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30 OF THIS YEAR IS ABOUT DOLS 16.5 MILLION.

Q. FROM WHEN?

A. FROM THE TIME THEY START. AS OF NOW I SUPPOSE, BECAUSE THEY PLAN TO HAVE OPERATION BEGIN IN FEBRUARY.

Q. COULD YOU CLARIFY SOMETHING?

A. BUT ON THE NAMES OF THE BIDDERS, I REALLY THINK THAT IT IS UP TO THE FIRMS THAT SUBMITTED THE BIDS. IF THE PEOPLE WHO SUBMITTED THE BIDS WANT TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES, THEY CAN IDENTIFY THEMSELVES.

Q. THAT IS NOT CORRECT. EXPENDITURE OF PUBLIC FUNDS, WHICH HAS BEEN THROUGH PUBLIC BIDDING HAS TO BE PUBLIC. I CAN'T COMPREHEND ANY OTHER.

A. LET ME CHECK INTO IT.

Q. WOULD YOU KNOW WHETHER E SYSTEMS HAS IN THE PAST DONE ANY SIMILAR JOBS, OR ANY KIND OF JOBS FOR THAT MATTER, FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT?

A. I DON'T HAVE BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE FIRM THAT WAS AWARDED THE CONTRACT.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT RETAIN ANY SAY OVER WHO IS HIRED BY E SYSTEMS? I SEE IT SAYS THAT THE DEPARTMENT IS TURNING OVER ALL LETTERS FROM APPLICANTS WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED.

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A. I DON'T KNOW WHAT CONTROL WILL BE EXERCISED BY THE DEPARTMENT, IF ANY.

Q. THERE WAS VARIOUS TESTIMONY GIVEN THAT NONE OF THE PEOPLE WOULD BE CIA OPERATIVES PAST OR PRESENT, ETC.

A. AS YOU KNOW, THE SINAI SUPPORT MISSION IS AN INTER-AGENCY GROUP. IT'S NOT A STATE DEPARTMENT FUNCTION. I HAVE BEEN PROVIDED SOME INFORMATION ON THIS. I MIGHT SUGGEST THAT YOU DIRECT QUESTION S TO THE MISSION ITSELF, OR MAYBE I COULD INVITE SOMEONE FROM THE MISSION TO COME DOWN ON MONDAY AND ANSWER DETAILED QUESTIONS YOU HAVE. QUITE FRANKLY, I DON'T HAVE ALL THE DETAILED INFORMATION ON IT.

Q. INVITE THEM TUESDAY. WE'VE GOT THE STATE OF THE UNION ON MONDAY.

A. OKAY, TUESDAY.

Q. I PROBABLY SHOULD KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS, BUT I DON'T. HOW DOES THIS MISSION OPERATE? WHAT IS ITS CHAIN OF COMMAND?

A. I THINK IT COMES BACK TO THE WHITE HOUSE BECAUSE THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. KONTOS WAS BY THE WHITE HOUSE. I BELIEVE MR. KONTOS WILL REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT THROUGH THE PRESIDENT'S ASSISTANT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, MR. SCOWCROFT.

Q. THERE IS AN INTERAGENCY BOARD, IS THERE NOT,

REPRESENTING STATE, CIA, AND OTHERS?

A. THERE ARE SEVERAL AGENCIES REPRESENTED.

Q. NICK THORNE WENT INTO THE FIELD TO SELECT OUR REAR ECHELON, OUR BACKUP TYPE BASE, NOT IN THE SINAI BUT SOMEWHERE NEAR THERE. HAS HE SELECTED A PLACE, FOR EXAMPLE, GREECE?

A. NO, I DON'T THINK THERE WILL BE THAT KIND OF BACKUP  
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BASE. I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THERE WILL BE SOME MINIMAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY OUR EMBASSIES IN EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

Q. THIS SAYS HE IS GOING TO BE THE OVERSEAS ARM. SO HE WON'T BE IN THE UNITED STATES.

A. BUT HE IS NOT GOING TO BE IN ATHENS; HE WILL BE IN THE SINAI.

Q. HE WILL? THORNE WILL?

A. THAT IS WHERE WE PLAN TO HAVE OUR PEOPLE.

Q. ALL 28, THESE 28?

A. YES.

Q. HOW ABOUT LEBANON? THERE IS A REPORT, A VERY RECENT ONE, WHICH WE HAVE, THAT THERE MAY BE A COUP UNDER WAY IN BEIRUT AT THE MOMENT. HAVE YOU ANY INFORMATION?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT.

Q. COULD YOU CHECK IT FOR US?

A. I WILL LOOK INTO IT.

Q. HAS THE UNITED STATES BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE SYRIANS ON THE SITUATION IN LEBANON TO ENCOURAGE THEM NOT TO INTERVENE?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH CONTACT, BUT CERTAINLY OUR POSITION HAS BEEN VERY CLEAR THAT THERE SHOULD NOT BE OUTSIDE INTERVENTION IN THE LEBANESE SITUATION.

Q. HAVE THE SYRIANS MADE ANY CONTACT WITH US TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

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Q. AT THE UN YESTERDAY HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO SUPPORT TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN CONSIDERING NEGOTIATIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST. AND THE SUGGESTION WAS THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOW BE ISOLATED IN ITS VIEW. CAN YOU RESPOND TO THAT SUGGESTION?

A. LET'S SEE HOW THE DEBATE UNFOLDS. YOU KNOW, RESOLUTIONS HAVEN'T BEEN TABLED. WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A DEBATE, AND I DON'T THINK IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO TRY TO MAKE AN ACCOUNT OR AN ASSESSMENT OF THE DEBATE AS IT STANDS TODAY.

THE SECRETARY MADE A GENERAL COMMENT ON THAT ON WEDNESDAY, AND I THINK I WILL JUST STAY WITH THAT.

Q. BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR WAS GOING TO SAY. DOES THE SECRETARY HAVE A VIEW OR AN OPINION ABOUT WHAT HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR SAID?

A. I DON'T KNOW THAT HE HAS A PERSONAL VIEW, NO.

Q. IS THE U.S. DOING ANYTHING AT ALL AT THIS TIME IN CONNECTION WITH THE LATEST FIGHTING IN LEBANON IN SO FAR AS ANY CONTACTS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, OR ANY KIND OF ACTIVITY THAT THE U.S. IS NOW INVOLVED IN?

A. I THINK I BETTER JUST STAND ON WHAT WE HAVE SAID

PUBLICLY, WHICH REPRESENTS OUR POLICY ON THE TRAGIC SITUATION IN LEBANON, WHICH WE HAVE SAID SEVERAL TIMES. AND THAT IS THAT WE DO NOT THINK THAT THERE SHOULD BE ANY OUTSIDE INTERVENTION IN THE LEBANESE PROBLEM.

I WOULD LIKE TO GO BACK TO THE POINT ON THE UN. IN THE PAST ON THIS WHOLE QUESTION SOMETIMES THE U.K. ASSESSMENT HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT THAN OURS.

Q. IS THE U.S. ASSESSMENT -- I'M NOT QUITE SURE WHAT THE EXACT LANGUAGE IS NOW. WE SAY THEY E NATIONAL  
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INTERESTS BUT NOT NATIONAL RIGHTS -- THE PALESTINIANS?

A. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER WE HAD EVER GOT INTO THAT DETAILED DESCRIPTION, AND I WOULD RATHER NOT GET INTO A

SEMANTIC EXERCISE. I THINK WE HAVE SAID IN THE PAST THAT ANY FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE THE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIANS AND A SOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. BUT OUR POSITION WITH RESPECT TO THE PLO, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS BEEN VERY CLEAR. WE CANNOT MAKE A DECISION ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM UNTIL THEY HAVE ACCEPTED THE STATE OF ISRAEL AND UNTIL THEY HAVE ACCEPTED UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS, SPECIFICALLY 242 AND 338.

Q. IS IT STILL THE U.S. PREFERENCE THAT THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM BE DEALT WITH THROUGH JORDAN?

A. I DON'T KNOW THAT THAT IS OUR PREFERENCE. OUR POSITION IS AS I HAVE JUST STATED.

Q. WHEN YOU SPEAK OF THE PALESTINIANS AND THEIR INTERESTS, ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THE REFUGEES OR THE PALESTINIANS AS A PEOPLE?

A. I THINK WE ARE TALKING ABOUT -- WELL, LET ME JUST LEAVE IT AT THAT.

Q. BOB, HASN'T IT BEEN U.S. POLICY, AT LEAST SINCE 1969, THAT THE PALESTINIANS, SO DESCRIBED, HAVE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS WHICH MUST BE AT SOME POINT DEFINED?

A. I THINK THAT IS WHAT I HAVE JUST TRIED TO RECALL IN RESPONSE TO LARS' QUESTION.

Q. IT'S IN THE INTEREST OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, ISN'T IT?

A. IN A GENERAL SENSE, THE INTEREST OF THE PALESTINIANS AND A SOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. I THINK WE HAVE DESCRIBED IT IN SIMILAR LANGUAGE IN THE PAST.

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Q. HAVE WE NOT GONE FARTHER AND TALKED ABOUT THEIR NATIONAL ASPIRATIONS?

A. WE MAY HAVE, BUT AT LEAST I WOULD LIKE TO LIMIT MYSELF TO WHAT I HAVE SAID TODAY.

KISSINGER

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